

No. 846 of 1890-91.

From

THE ACTING CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS,  
SIND CIRCLE.

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,  
REVENUE DEPARTMENT,  
BOMBAY.

*Conservator's Office,  
Hyderabad, 10th September 1890.*

SIR,

I have the honor to forward herewith the Forest Administration Report of the Sind Circle for the year 1889-90, with its subsidiary statements.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

W. S. HEXTON,  
Acting Conservator of Forests, Sind Circle.

(Submitted through the Commissioner in Sind.)

ANNUAL FOREST ADMINISTRATION REPORT OF THE SIND  
CIRCLE FOR THE YEAR 1889-90.

CHAPTER I.

*Area and Boundaries.*

The following areas are reported as having been eroded and deposited by the action of the river on the forests on its banks :—

Name of Division.	Area lost by the action of the river.	Area gained by the action of the river.
	Acres.	Acres.
Sukkur ... ..	1,425	6,235
Naushahro ... ..	1,250	740
Hyderabad ... ..	1,300	550
Jerruck ... ..	200	...
Total...	4,175	7,525

These areas are mere estimates of what has taken place, and owing to the uncertain nature of the accretions should not, in my opinion, be annually

deducted from or added to the general statement of areas. On this principle annual form No. 49 for the year under report has been prepared. In order to ascertain correctly, the actual effects on the areas of the forests caused by the action of the river, a periodical revision of the forest survey should be made. The last survey having been made in 1868, it is therefore now time it should be revised.

2. I am perfectly certain that within the last twenty years the loss has been considerably in excess of the gain, notwithstanding the assiduity with which the officers of the Forest Department have watched its interests, and have constantly disputed the encroachments on the forest frontages that have been attempted from time to time by the zamindars: this procedure on the part of the Forest Officers has caused what are termed "katcha disputes" to become very troublesome, and a new set of rules for their disposal has been the result. The alluvion and diluvion rules, according to which former decisions were arrived at, are not to be applicable for the future, and it now rests with the Collectors to recognize or not, as the case may be, the claims of the Forest Department to new lands deposited by the river. Owing to the silting up of old channels, the formation of new ones, and the return of the river to one of its old-beds, the disposal of kacha disputes becomes very difficult, but the statements made by Forest Officers should carry more weight than those of the zamindars, who are not very particular in what they state, as long as they can get possession of new land yielding very large returns for little or no expenditure of labour. A good deal of correspondence ensued on the first issue of these rules, the contention of the Forest Department being that they are practically illegal.

3. When the riverside forests were first notified as reserved forests, they were defined as having the river a boundary on one side, therefore it stands to reason that all new land which may subsequently have been formed by any alteration taking place in the river's course, should be regarded as belonging to the forest to which it is attached, and the boundary lines on both sides of the forest should be produced, till they touch the river in its new channel. Such accretions cannot be interfered with or given out for cultivation by the Collector, until such time as they have been disforested under the Forest Act. As the loss and gain entered in the annual statements are only vague estimates, a survey alone will show what has really happened, and if it is found that I am correct in what I have stated and the forests have lost in area, it should be made good to the department by handing over old katcha lands, of which there are extensive tracts on both banks of the river.

4. The following table gives the area of the Sind Forests as it stood on the 31st March 1889, with the areas acquired and disforested under the Forest Act:—

Name of Division	Area as it stood on 31st March 1889.				Area added during the year 1889-90.				Area excluded during the year.				Area as it stood on 31st March 1890.			
	Reserved.		Protected.		Reserved.		Protected.		Reserved.		Protected.		Reserved.		Protected.	
	Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.		Sqr. Miles.	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Sukkur	445	137	1	128	13	260	...	...	12	193	...	...	446	204	1	128
Naushahro	233	342	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	233	342	...	...
Hyderabad	158	578	...	...	1	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	159	581	...	...
Jerruck	125	424	...	...	26	53	...	117	...	...	...	...	151	477	...	117
Total	963	201	1	128	40	316	...	117	12	193	...	...	991	324	1	245

5. The sum of Rs. 1,383 was expended on the prevention of trees falling into the river, and a portion of the material thus rescued realized Rs. 2,892-7-2.

6. Areas notified under Section 19 of the Forest Act, during the year under report are given below :—

Name of Forest.	Taluka.	Area in Acres.
Drago ... ..	Ghotki ... ..	2 5
Nurketi ... ..	Hala ... ..	643 5
Kacho Shah Lanko ... ..	} Tatta ... ..	313 20
„ Aliganj ... ..		714 38
Bayo Purandas ... ..		6,413 0
Bijora ... ..		5,889 25
Chachh ... ..		3,361 27
Total...		17,338 0

7. If the Forest Department is expected to keep up a permanent supply of fuel for the State Railway, the selection, demarcation and acquisition of new land is far from being complete, and if the wood is to be delivered at the stations at a moderate rate, the new reserves must be situated on the banks of the river, water carriage being infinitely cheaper than carts, camels or donkeys.

8. The income from firewood and charcoal in the year 1870-71 was Rs. 1,23,151, and in 1887-88 it had increased to Rs. 4,19,430. The demands, however, is still daily increasing with the introduction of steam machinery for cotton, flour and ice, and also people in Karachi and the Commissariat Department at Quetta are making inquiries for fuel. Having very nearly exhausted the supply of fuel in the Bahawalpur State, the railway authorities would be only too glad if we could make up the deficiency from the Sind-forests. Large tracts of land along the river are still available, and their acquisition by the Forest Department should not be deferred.

9. In the Thar and Parkar Districts 1,39,768 acres were selected during the year under report as fuel reserves for a future railway. These lands, I think, should be handed over to the Forest Department at once, notwithstanding the proposed arrangements of the Deputy Commissioner that they should be left in his charge until the railway has been sanctioned.

10. The table given below shows the lands that have been selected for forest reservation and provisionally notified under Section 4 of the Forest Act, and the final reservation of which is still awaited :—

Name of Forest.	Taluka.	Area in Acres.
Khairwah ...	Jacobabad ...	56 30
Gokalpur ...		64 30
Tarai ...	Naushahro Abro.	2,349 5
Chango Rahuja ...		1,749 35
Choi ...		3,132 20
Adamji ...		4,352 25
Phohyri ...		473 4
Masti Khan ...	Hala ...	225 0
Sekhat ...		12 35